

Border Eagle

Vol. 53, No. 40

Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas

October 7, 2005



Photo by Senior Airman Austin May

Second Lt. Tyler Young conducts a pre-flight check of his T-1 Jayhawk before flying for the first time Sept. 20 without an instructor in the plane. Lieutenant Young and his copilot, 2nd Lt. Jonathan Gardner, are student pilots in the 86th Flying Training Squadron. Both are members of Class 06-03, the first class in almost five years to participate in what are known as team sorties.

Team sorties build confidence in SUPT students

86th FTS Class 06-03 first in almost 5 years to 'solo' in T-1 Jayhawks

**By Senior Airman
Austin M. May**
Staff writer

There is no I in team.

One can find this phrase on motivational posters and banners anywhere from high-school football locker rooms to slideshows at a wing commander's call. In most cases, the I indicates an individual, implying that one person cannot do what would normally require the combined efforts of two or more people. For Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training Class 06-03, on Sept. 20, the I stood for instructor.

For the first time since the fall of 2000, student pilots from the 86th Flying Training Squadron here were given the opportunity to fly the closest thing

to a solo flight in the T-1 Jayhawk trainer aircraft. In what is called a "team sortie," two student pilots fly the T-1 together without an instructor pilot, the only time they do so during their six months in phase three of pilot training.

"A team sortie is the T-1's version of a solo," said Capt. Chris Credno, 86th FTS I flight commander and an instructor pilot. "The T-1 is a two-pilot aircraft, so students, or IPs for that matter, will never fly a T-1 solo."

According to Captain Credno, team sorties were stopped due to a regular aircraft malfunction that was occurring in the T-1 which could have possibly led to a dangerous situation for a team sortie crew to handle at this phase in their training without instruc-

tor assistance.

However, instructors and students alike felt that team sorties were a crucial part of the training experience for pilots.

"The team sortie serves as an incredible confidence builder for the students. They are able to test everything their IPs have taught them, and they get to apply it all in the aircraft without the safety net of the IP stopping them if it is not the right course of action," said Captain Credno. "It proves to them they are indeed learning a lot and are almost fully qualified Air Force pilots with the skills to handle a multitude of situations."

The decision to bring back team

See 'Team sorties,' page 5

Newslines

Education town hall meeting

An education town hall meeting will be conducted at 7 p.m. Oct. 19 in the base theater. Discussion will be led by the 47th Flying Training Wing vice commander, Col. Thomas Arko, and will include issues parents have with the San Felipe Del Rio Consolidated Independent School District.

All Laughlin personnel, living on or off base, who have children attending school are encouraged and welcome to attend.

Air Force Association dinner

The Order of Daedalians and the Del Rio Chapter of the Air Force Association will conduct a prime rib buffet dinner at 6 p.m. Oct. 13 at Club XL. The guest speaker will be retired Air Force Lt. Gen. John Sams, former commander of 15th Air Force, and currently vice president for Air Force Systems at Boeing. The event costs \$20 per person and is open to all Laughlin members. For tickets call Larry Martwig at 298-5501.

See Newslines, page 6.

Deployment stats

| | |
|-----------------------|----|
| Deployed: | 17 |
| Returning in 30 days: | 4 |
| Deploying in 30 days: | 1 |

Mission status

*Mission capable rate
(As of Tuesday)*

| | |
|--------------|------------|
| T-1, 92.2% | T-6, 97.7% |
| T-38C, 85.5% | |

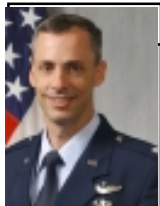
Alcohol-related incidents

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| January to October 2004 | 20 |
|-------------------------|----|

| | |
|---------------------------|----|
| Jan. 1 to October 7, 2005 | 20 |
|---------------------------|----|

| | |
|--------------------------|----|
| Days since last incident | 28 |
|--------------------------|----|

Readiness: key to mission success



Commander's Corner

By Lt. Col. George Day
84th Flying Training Squadron
commander

Readiness. Pretty common word, especially for those of us in the Air Force. We're reminded of it all the time – Readiness Council, combat readiness, Ready.Gov (U.S. Department of Homeland Security), TRICARE Family Readiness. Have you ever wondered why we train and exercise so often? Answer: So that we – as a wing, as a unit, as a team, as individuals – are ready.

So what exactly is readiness? Here are some synonyms which define as much an individual attitude as they do a state of being: Eagerness, Preparation, Good Will, Willingness, Fitness. I'd even go one step further: Readiness is the attitude of anticipating the worst, yet expecting the best.

Don't get me wrong, though – readiness is not some level of perfection. General Omar N. Bradley, famous WWII Army General who led U.S. troops in the D-Day invasion of the Normandy beaches of France, said, "I learned that good judg-

ment comes from experience and that experience grows out of mistakes." Let me put his words another way: Along the way to reaching that level called "experienced," you will encounter difficult solutions or even failure. Of course it sure helps to learn from the mistakes of others, but I can guarantee from personal experience that we sometimes tend to like to find out for ourselves!

Here in the 47th Flying Training Wing, our mission statement is defined by a state of readiness, which can be discussed in three parts.

Train to Fight: This is what the 84th Flying Training Squadron Panthers (and the 47th FTW) are all about. Not only do we lead the world in training military pilots, but we also exercise to do our expeditionary duties too, such as operational readiness exercises, Full Spectrum Threat Response exercises, individual warrior skills training (SABC, CWDT, weapons qualification), ... the list goes on. As we plan and execute, we become more experienced to handle most situations. Which leads us to ...

Fight to Win: Back to that right attitude again. Many in our wing are deployed right now to Iraq, Afghanistan and other parts of the world, and are engaged in the most important conflict of our time – the Global War on Terrorism. Their cause – our cause – has but one acceptable outcome

for those who cherish freedom: Win.

Trust and Teamwork: The U.S. Declaration of Independence speaks volumes in simply the mention of three God given rights for all: Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness. Many have fought and died in fervent defense of these principles. We find true strength in the bonds established as we hold each other as worthy.

Let me give a personal example of readiness from my top role model. My dad, as a result of his experiences in WWII and the Korean War, was ready when called to lead a fighter squadron to Vietnam. Additionally, he and his fellow squadron mates were ready to tackle and perfect a new mission as they took the fight to the enemy. When he met failure – shot down by enemy fire – he was ready to escape and evade the enemy for over two weeks. When recaptured, he was ready to suffer at the hands of his captors in mutual support of his fellow POWs for another 67 months. And he was readied for all this by a loving wife, deserving friends, a grateful nation, and a faithful God.

You see, readiness is at the heart of our life events. And when a readiness attitude permeates an individual or team, nothing is an obstacle to success.

You may be ready, but are you prepared?

By Maj. Dani Johnson
4th Air Expeditionary Group

I thought I was ready to deploy but I didn't realize how unprepared I really was until I received orders to move within 24 hours. I had to ask myself the question: How prepared am I to face unexpected contingencies or disasters?

I received the notice the morning of Sept. 3 to deploy the next day to Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., for Joint Task Force-Katrina. My mind scrambled as I

thought about what I needed: orders, plane tickets, gear. My staff had to be recalled so I could go over the next month's events since I didn't know how long I would be gone. Professionally I was ready and prepared.

Personally, I wasn't quite as ready. As I did five loads of laundry, my mind went over what I would need. I had the recommended packing list but that had primarily only professional gear listed. I thought I had everything until I got here, unrolled my sleeping bag and realized I didn't

bring a pillow. Living in bare base conditions, there were small things I could have brought to enhance my quality of life. But because I wasn't prepared, I forgot them.

While I was packing and calling my parents, I had to find someone to watch my cats. Military families with children have to have a short-term care program. Those of us with pets aren't required to have one. I realized that I needed to have a

See 'Prepared,' page 3

Border Eagle

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Deadlines

News for the Border Eagle should be submitted to the 47th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs Office, Bldg. 338, Laughlin AFB, TX, 298-5262. **Copy deadline is close of business each Thursday the week prior to publication.**

Submissions can be e-mailed to: olufemi.owolabi@laughlin.af.mil or sheila.johnston@laughlin.af.mil.

Advertising

Advertising should be submitted to the Del Rio News-Herald, 2205 Bedell, Del Rio, TX, 774-4611. Advertising should be submitted by 4 p.m. each Friday.

Actionline

Col. Tod Wolters
47th Flying Training
Wing commander



Call 298-5351 or email
actionline@laughlin.af.mil

One way to work through problems that haven't been solved through normal channels is the Commander's Actionline.

Before you call in or e-mail an Actionline, please try to work out the problem through the normal chain of command or directly with the base agency involved.

When calling or e-mailing the Actionline, please keep messages brief and remember to include your name and phone number so you are assured of a timely personal reply. Contact information is also useful when additional information is needed to pursue your inquiry.

We will make every attempt to ensure confidentiality when appropriate.

If your question relates to the general interest of the people of Laughlin, the question and answer may also be printed in the Border Eagle.

Thanks for your cooperation, and I look forward to reading some quality ideas and suggestions.

Below are some useful telephone numbers that may be helpful when working your issue with a base agency.

| | |
|--------------------|----------|
| AAFES | 298-3176 |
| Finance | 298-5204 |
| Civil Engineer | 298-5252 |
| Civilian Personnel | 298-5299 |
| Clinic | 298-6311 |
| Commissary | 298-5815 |
| Dormitory manager | 298-5213 |
| EEO | 298-5879 |
| FWA hotline | 298-4170 |
| Housing | 298-5904 |
| Information line | 298-5201 |
| Legal | 298-5172 |
| MEO | 298-5400 |
| Military Personnel | 298-5073 |
| Public Affairs | 298-5988 |
| Security Forces | 298-5900 |
| Services | 298-5810 |

“Through trust and teamwork, train expeditionary airpower experts to fight and win America’s wars.”

— 47th Flying
Training Wing
mission statement

Naturalization ceremony reemphasizes patriotism

By Kathy White
Public Affairs

Last week, I had the privilege of attending a naturalization ceremony in San Antonio where 618 people from 77 countries became citizens of the United States of America. Among our newest citizens were a few Airmen from Laughlin.

In the audience were hundreds of family members, friends and coworkers. Like our group, they were there to celebrate with one or more of the new citizens.

It was one of the best ceremonies I've ever been to. I was born in this country and tend to take the rights and privileges of my citizenship for granted. This ceremony sure changed that!

It was thrilling to listen to them take their citizenship oath. You could feel their elation as the reality set in—they were now citizens of the USA.

As part of the ceremony, four of the new citizens were asked to speak. The first speaker, a man from Egypt, started his remarks with, “Hello, fellow Americans. Sounds good, doesn't it?” Another, a young woman from Panama, said “Now I am part of this great and blessed nation.”

The judge who presided over the ceremony reminded the new citizens of two key responsibilities: voting and jury duty. He stressed that the two are cornerstones of citizenship; that this nation has endured because its citizens vote and serve on juries.

Prepared, from page 2

plan for these exact times. Thank goodness for the kindness of neighbors.

After I redeploy, you can bet I will have a personal short-notice deployment kit at home with a to-do list with what needs to be done before I depart.

Shortly after I arrived, I escorted national media on a helicopter flight over the city. As I looked down at the water surrounding houses, I asked myself: Would I be ready to evacuate my home if I needed to? What would I take with me?

Many of us don't want to deal with the reality that a disaster

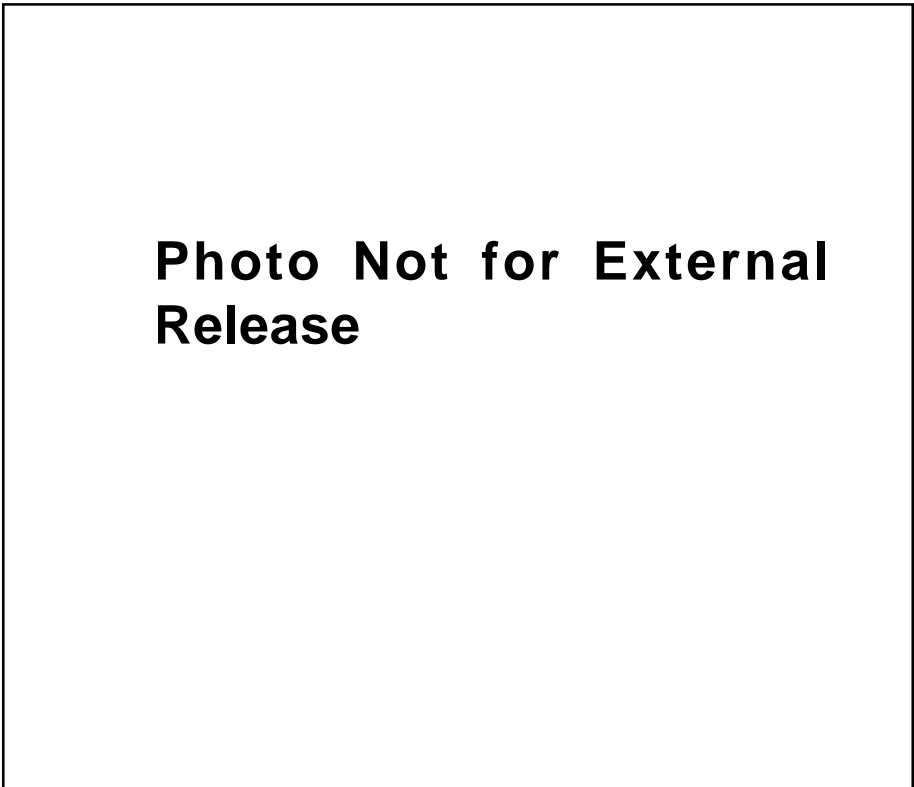


Photo by Master Sgt. Anthony Hill

Three of America's newest citizens, Airmen 1st Class Romeo Tcheutchua and Chul Kim, 47th Civil Engineer Squadron, and Olufemi Owolabi, 47th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs, proudly display their certificates of United States citizenship.

I watched as most of the new citizens happily signed their voter registration cards and turned them in. I knew this was a group who took the judge's words to heart. These are 618 new citizens who will live up to their responsibilities.

After the ceremony, happy families gathered for photos, proudly displaying the forms which proved their citizenship. I couldn't help but be proud of our

new citizens, proud of a nation that welcomes them with open arms and grateful that I was born here.

I congratulated a young woman who passed by with her paperwork in hand and her American flag pin proudly affixed to her dress. Her response was the brightest smile I've seen in ages.

Too bad everyone can't go to a naturalization ceremony.

could happen to us. Unfortunately it has been proven time and time again that something will happen. Once I'm home, I will also create a list of what I would take with me if I had to evacuate my home.

The other part of being prepared is ensuring you can replace your belongings if needed. I'm not advocating one insurance company over the other, but it's important, whether you are renting or owning, that you have insurance to cover any losses.

Along with having insurance is having the right insurance. According to a news report, many residents here admitted to

complacency with hurricane warnings and evacuations. A Post-Kaiser-Harvard poll stated 7 out of 10 people had no insurance (renters or homeowners) to cover losses. Only 40 percent of homeowners had flood insurance. Now that might be surprising to many but if you aren't prepared and have become complacent, you don't always do what really needs to be done. It's the “won't happen to me” syndrome.

As my deployment here winds down, I realize while I was ready to help, I wasn't as prepared as I thought I was. I can guarantee you I will be next time. Will you?

Laughlin sponsors contest, observes Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Laughlin’s Family Advocacy Program, Chapel and Family Support Center staff will sponsor a contest this month in observance of Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Contestants will complete and submit a crossword puzzle in order to enter drawings for prizes.

Hints for the crossword puzzle will be contained within newspaper articles that focus on various aspects of family violence, scheduled for publication in the Border Eagle over the next three weeks.

The contest is open to active duty members and their families, retirees, and civilian and contract employees here.

The puzzle entry forms can be picked up at Domestic Violence Awareness Month displays at the base library, life skills support center and the base exchange.

Contestants can complete the puzzle as many times as they wish and drop them in the lock boxes at the display locations.

Organizers remind people to write their names and daytime telephone numbers on the crossword puzzle, which is the official entry form.

Only those entries submitted with an accurately-completed puzzle will be eligible for the drawings.

There will be five prize winners, each receiving a \$100 gift card donated by the Family Support Center and chapel staff. The last date for entries is Oct. 31.

Drawings will be held at 3 p.m. Nov. 7 at the Health and Wellness Center inside the Losano Fitness Center. Contestants do not need to be present to win.

For more information about the contest, call Karen Doss at 298-6422.

4 x 11

Team sorties, from
page 1

sorties was accepted enthusiastically by instructor pilots at the 86th FTS.

“With solutions to the previous aircraft malfunction problems in place to prevent mishaps in the future, the decision to bring the team sortie back online is in line with the current philosophy of instilling confidence and professionalism in young aviators and student pilots,” said Capt. Jeremy Bergin, 86th FTS I flight assistant commander and an instructor pilot.

“It is a huge confidence boost for both the students and the instructors,” he said. “Students also see first hand that as crew members, they share

an equal responsibility in the safe operation of the aircraft throughout the entire flight.”

Being trusted behind the yoke of the T-1 without an instructor is something the students hold in very high regard.

“I think the opportunity to fly a T-1 with only another student on board provides an excellent learning opportunity for both the pilot and the co-pilot,” said 2nd Lt. Jonathan Gardner, a student pilot in Class 06-03. “Each student was able to truly understand how important it is to work together as a crew.”

“Without an IP on board, the safety and success of the flight rests with both students as a crew. I am pleased to know that the 86th FTS and IPs trust us to fly as a team.

“The greatest part of the

team sortie is the confidence gained from flying to a different airport as the pilot in command. Afterward, you realize how important the training has been thus far and that you can work together as a crew and as well be successful,” Lieutenant Gardner said.

Which single part of the team sortie experience was most valuable in the learning process varied from student to student.

“The biggest benefit of the team sortie for me is the realization that there is flying out there outside of pilot training,” said Maj. Kyle Carpenter, a student pilot in Class 06-03 who will be flying C-130s for the Idaho Air National Guard. “Flying with another student, I could just put into practice what I had learned without having to worry about

how I would be graded at the end of the flight. That is more what it will be like when I move on to other aircraft.”

For most of the student pilots involved in team sorties, the biggest drawback is that they only fly without an instructor once during phase three.

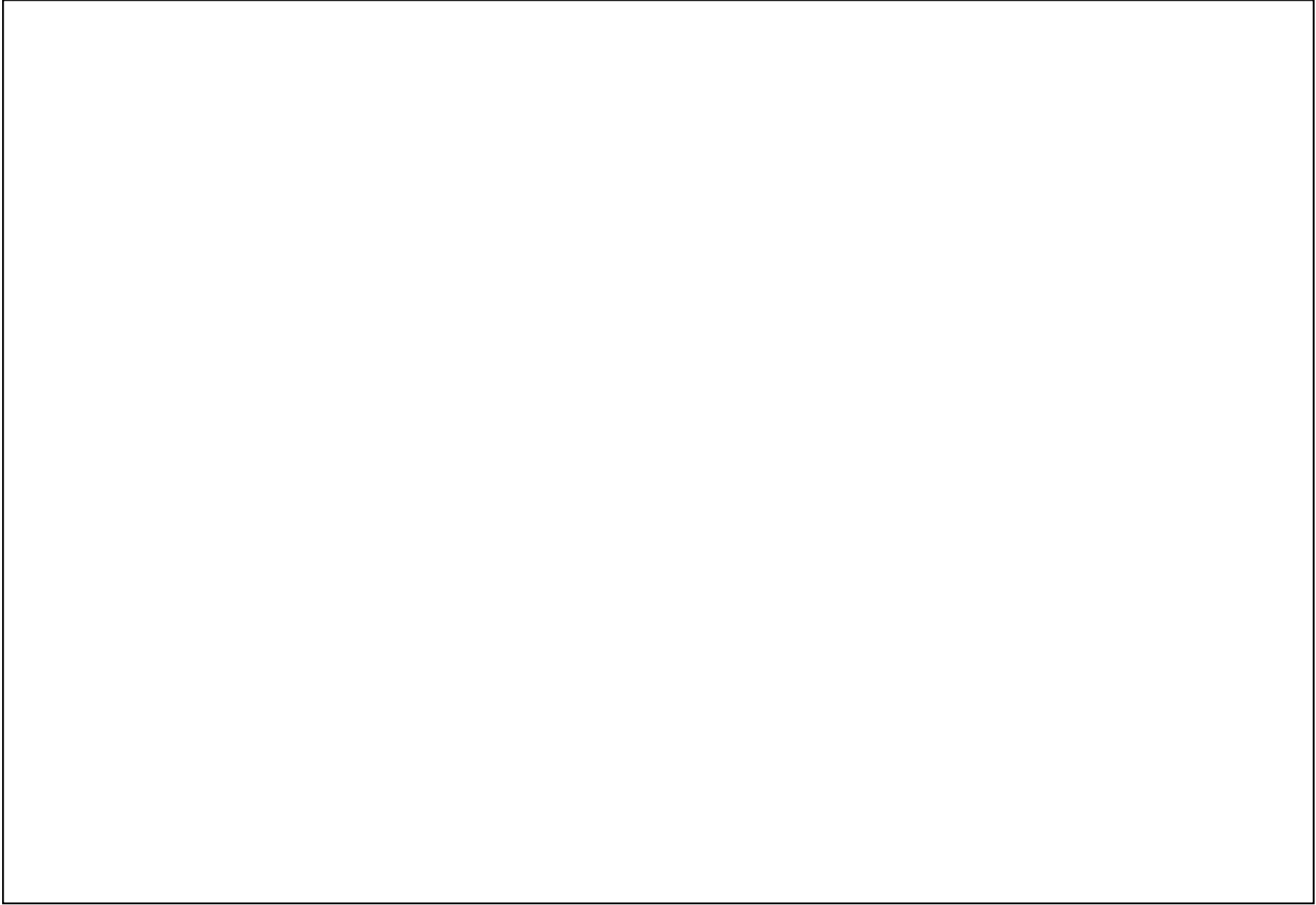
“The students only get one ride, and that ride was converted from an instructional sortie into a team sortie,” said Captain Bergin. “Had the syllabus incorporated the team sortie with an additional 1.6 hours of flight time, the students in the new syllabus would have as many instructional sorties as those in the old syllabus and currently in training.”

Team sorties are scheduled to be part of the curriculum for each class of student pilots flying the T-1. The attitude toward the flights, with both pilots and

instructors, seems very positive.

“I think it is fantastic that our supervisors have enough faith and trust in the instruction that we provide on a daily basis to allow two students to take a \$5.1 million aircraft over complex airspace and land at an airfield well outside the local area and support network,” Captain Bergin said.

“I am confident that the students on their team sortie are as capable as previous students at the same point in their training. Those previous students would have been able to complete the team sortie with the same professionalism and airmanship that was demonstrated just recently when members of Class 06-03 took to the skies without an instructor holding their hand” he said.



4X10

Newslines

Selection for promotions

Congratulations!
Majs. Michael Griener, 47th Comptroller Squadron commander, Chris Hall, 84th Flying Training Squadron and Scott Schaefer, 86th FTS, were selected for promotion during a recent Air Force promotion selecting board.

Also, 50 first lieutenants were selected for promotion to captain.

Laughlin’s recent lieutenant colonel and captain selects will host a promotion party today at 4:30 p.m. at Club XL. All base personnel are invited to attend.

See names of 50 XLers selected for promotion to captain, page 7.

Quarterly award luncheon

The 47th Flying Training Wing Third Quarter Awards Luncheon will be held at 11:30 a.m. Oct. 26 at Club XL.

All nominees should R.S.V.P. with Master Sgt. Rufino Gonzalez at 298-5222.

Commanders and distinguished visitors should R.S.V.P. with the protocol office at 298-4708 or 298-4709.

All others planning on attending should contact their unit representatives to sign up on the pro rata sheet.

For more information, call 298-5222 or 298-5703.

1X2

AETC commander visits Laughlin, talks issues

By 1st Lt. Sheila N. Johnston
Public Affairs

Gen. William R. Looney III, commander of Air Education and Training Command, visited Laughlin Sept. 27 and 28 as part of his tour of AETC bases.

While visiting, he had breakfast with Laughlin company grade officers, NCOs and junior- enlisted members. He also met with honor guard members, toured the enlisted dormitories, the security forces complex, and held a commander’s call.

During the commander’s call, General Looney talked about issues affecting Laughlin, AETC and the Air Force. He also introduced the new vision statement for AETC and elaborated on its meaning and importance.

The vision, “To deliver unrivaled air and space education and training,” is something the command is already doing, General Looney said. But it takes hard work to stay on top.

Other major points included individual importance, being a team player, staying positive, upholding and living by standards, and safety. He also covered the idea of a “warfighter,” a term that applies to all Airmen whether deployed or at home, and the importance of family. He explained that families should be the number one priority in bad times as well as good, because when their families are taken care of, Airmen can better focus on the mission.

During an interview after the commander’s call, General Looney added that AETC will continue to sup-

port operations as we do now, but he doesn’t see our focus changing so much that we forget our main mission — training Airmen.

“We are in the business of training. We don’t want to train while executing missions, we want to send fully-trained Airmen who are qualified to execute those missions,” he said.

He added that AETC is not only responsible for training Airmen as warfighters, but it is also responsible for recruiting and educating the force. While we have three huge roles in developing the Air Force, he said, we will continue to provide support personnel such as civil engineers, fire fighters, contracting personnel, security forces, medics and others for global operations.

To help accomplish these missions, General Looney recognized Laughlin

has a high percentage of civilian employees. He talked about the National Security Personnel System and how after the Air Force works through the growing pains and gets past the fear of the unknown, the system will be only positive.

“I know a lot of effort has been put into the National Security Personnel System,” he said. “NSPS is the right step forward for our civilian workforce. It will recognize the innovative and creative spirit of that workforce and reward those who are doing magnificent work for the Air Force. Our Air Force civilians are a crucial part of the force. Without them, we would not be able to do the mission. I think this new system will be a positive change from the way we currently operate.”

Recent changes improve Korean assignment program

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE—Recent policy changes to the Korea Assignment Incentive Pay Program enable Airmen to apply for the program before or after their arrival in South Korea.

The KAIP authorizes \$300 monthly payments to Airmen who sign a written agreement to serve the prescribed tour length in South Korea plus an additional 12 months.

Previously, Airmen were required to accept or decline the program prior to their permanent change of station departure from their current base. Now, Airmen who decline the KAIP prior to their PCS move may still accept a KAIP tour after their arrival in South Korea. If applying after arrival, they may do so at any time prior to entering their Date Eligible for Return from Overseas forecast window that starts on the first day of the 10th month prior to their DEROS from South Korea.

Airmen who accept the

KAIP before PCSing to Korea are ineligible to apply for a follow-on or home-basing assignment.

Likewise, Airmen who arrive in South Korea with either a follow-on or home-basing assignment will lose that assignment if they elect to participate in KAIP. If eligible, they may still request one of the following extension programs: the Overseas Tour Extension Incentive Program; an In-place Consecutive Overseas Tour; a subsequent DEROS extension; or another KAIP tour for the same tour length.

For more information on this program, visit the Air Force Personnel Center’s assignment procedures Web site at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/procedures>. KAIP information is linked under Hot and/or New Topics.

Courtesy Air Force Personnel Center

XLers selected for promotion to captain

47th Aeromedical-Dental Squadron

Kylie Maclellan
Karen Negran

47th Contracting Squadron

Edwin Gutierrez

47th Medical operations Squadron

Terri Anderson

47th Mission Support Group

Andre Clark

47th Mission Support Squadron

Rena Hall

Terri Jones

47th Operations Support Squadron

Margaret Eichner

Randall Heusser

84th Flying Training Squadron

Timothy Chapman

Sean Demeter

Alan Dick

James Ferris

Catherine Gutierrez

George Houghton

Matthew Kenkel

Nathan Loucks

Chad Richards

85th Flying Training Squadron

Michael Granberry

Christopher Guarente

Andrew Korsmo

Peter Mauro

Samuel Moore

Chad Norheim

Shelby Robb

Zachary Sauerman

86th Flying Training Squadron

Andrew Cavallero

Charles Eichner

Dick Janssen

John Mahan

Peter McClellan

Matthew Murphy

Andrew Patrick

Leonardo Tongko

Jonathon Waller

William Weldon

Brian Epperson

Sean Matthews

Menola Paiva

Zachary Tews

87th Flying Training Squadron

Keith Anderson

Steven Baker

Brad Caywood

Daniel Collette

Mark Fogel

Chad Fuller

Nikolaos Stathopoulos

Aaron Weedman

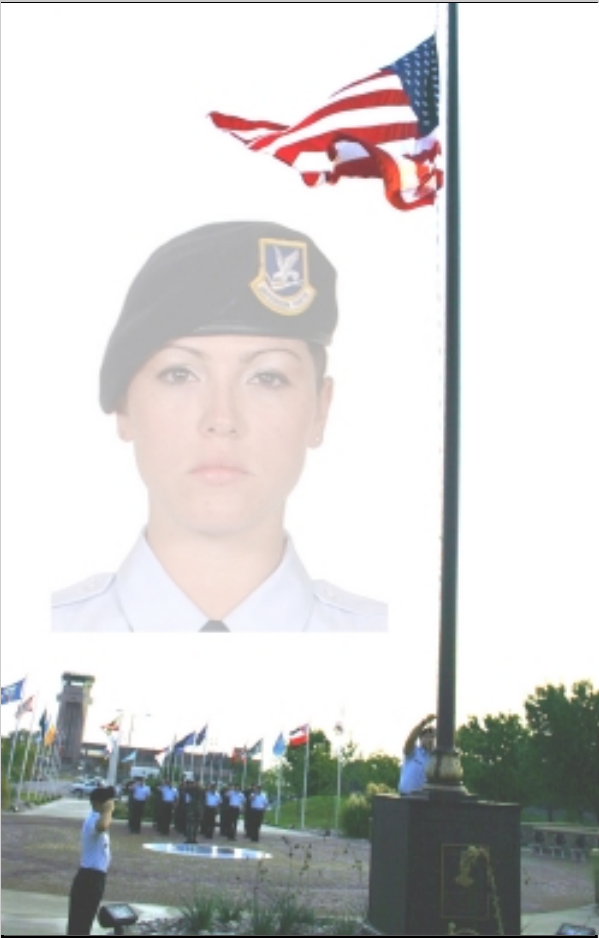
Abram Woody

Michael Culhane

Fallen Security Forces Airman remembered

Staff Sgt. Michael Crowley renders a salute along with a formation of 47th Security Forces Squadron members as Staff Sgt. Joseph Joslin lowers the base flag to half staff Thursday. Security Forces, as well as Laughlin members who knew her, conducted the event to observe the combat death of Airman 1st Class Elizabeth Jacobson, 21, a security forces member from Goodfellow Air Force Base in San Angelo. Airman Jacobson was killed Sept. 28 when an improvised explosive device detonated and hit a convoy vehicle she was riding in near Camp Bucca, Iraq. Airman Jacobson, a native of Riviera, Fla., had been in Iraq for more than three months supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. A memorial service for the fallen Airmen was held Thursday at Goodfellow.

Photo illustration by Capt. Ken Hall



2X4

Air Force
News
ONLINE

Access current news and information at United States Air Force Online News, the official news source of the Air Force. With a simple mouse click go to www.af.mil/news

2X5

2X4

Command chief shares views on Laughlin, AETC mission

By Senior Airman
Austin M. May
Staff Writer

During his visit to Laughlin Sept. 28, Air Education and Training Command's top enlisted advisor addressed issues that affect enlisted members of both AETC and Laughlin.

Chief Master Sgt. Rodney Ellison, AETC Command Chief Master Sergeant, first took note of Laughlin's quality of life initiatives.

"I was very impressed with the facilities at Laughlin," Chief Ellison said. "The base is beautiful, and there is a new construction project on almost every corner. The quality of life here is greatly improving, even though there are still some issues being worked on. There are several projects being looked at for fiscal 06-07, such as privatization of family housing."

Chief Ellison understood that the way Team XL members work and play is vital to the success of the mission.

"Quality of life is a very important issue in an isolated area such as Laughlin," he said. "We try to make a variety of services available to our Airmen, and I was very impressed with



Command Chief Master Sgt. Rodney Ellison discusses his views on enlisted issues for both AETC and Laughlin.

what Laughlin has to offer."

Mission success was one of the subjects Chief Ellison seemed most passionate about.

"The most important part of our job is the mission," he said. "At Laughlin, the mission is mainly to train the next generation of Air Force aviators, while maintaining our Air Expeditionary Force requirements. Laughlin members are doing an outstanding job

with that, and are always cognitive of their role in the training process.

"The goal," he said, "is to train some of the finest Airmen the Air Force has ever seen, to be second to none, and have no discrepancies.

"Our responsibility in AETC is to train every Airman with skills they will use throughout their career early on. We are the face of the Air Force. From the example we set, we can become role models for future generations of Airmen."

Chief Ellison commented on what it means to be one of the first steps in an Airman's military career.

"As the first command an Airman encounters, AETC is the first experience with how the Air Force works. Whatever a person is taught first will remain with them the longest; therefore, the first command has a lot of responsibility, and standards to adhere to," he said.

Chief Ellison mentioned why he thought Air Force members should only spend a few years in an AETC assignment.

"In AETC, we need professional instructors, not career instructors," he said. "Being an instructor means being

a subject matter expert in your particular field, and to be an expert you must spend time actually doing the job.

"We need people to come into the command for a tour and then go back to the field with the skills they have learned and taught still fresh in their minds," he said. "Our instructors need to be credible and current in tactics and procedures used in the field today. If an Airman remains in an instructor position for too long they can lose their operational mind set, and their job knowledge can become dated. This can diminish their credibility as an instructor.

Before his departure from Laughlin, Chief Ellison stressed that he was very pleased with the overall mindset of Team XL.

"I'm very impressed with the positive attitude displayed toward the mission here," he said. "Everyone is doing their part in a professional manner, and that's exactly what we need. It's important to remember that our mission in AETC is not to look at where the Air Force is today, but where it will be in the future and then to train accordingly. That is an awesome goal."

AF launches climate survey, provides online assessment

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (AFPN) — Airmen have the power to shape the future during the 2005 Air Force Climate Survey which launched Saturday.

"The direction we take depends on you!" said Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Gerald Murray. "The motto of the 2005 Climate Survey, 'Speak Today, Shape Tomorrow,' accurately reflects the impact this survey has on our Air Force. It's your chance to provide honest and straightforward answers to issues that directly affect you and your fellow Airmen. Your identity is protected, and every response is reviewed for consideration."

The survey, offered every two years since 1997, measures how people feel about

leadership, supervision, training, recognition and other aspects of the Air Force. This year's survey also measures enduring competencies such as effective communication, teamwork, judgment and adaptation under pressure.

The survey provides a total force perspective and includes active-duty members, civilians, the Air Force Reserve Command and Air National Guard.

The survey runs through Nov. 23 and can be completed online anytime during the survey period from either a government or personal computer. The survey can be found at <https://afclimatesurvey.af.mil>.

(Courtesy Air Force Manpower Agency Public Affairs)



Photo by Technical Sgt. Eric Maye

Dorm World Challenge

Members of enlisted Dorm 255 gather strength in a tug-o-war contest Saturday as this year's Dorm World 3 Challenge got underway here. Laughlin's two dorms, 255 and 256, are participating in the annual competition, which will continue in a variety of contests over the next few months. Saturday's events included the tug-o-war and water balloon dodgeball contests, and a barbecue. Residents also played a friendly game of volleyball. Dorm 255 won the tug-o-war and Dorm 256 took dodgeball honors.



Photos by Jose Mendoza

FIT TO FIGHT DAY FULL OF CHALLENGES



First Lieutenant Ademola Elliott (left), 47th Services Division, and Staff Sgt. Kimberly Williams, 47th Mission Support Squadron, accelerate during the 100-meter dash.



Master Sgt. Jeffrey Cunningham, 47th Mission Support Squadron, participates in the push-up relay event.

Members of Team XL put forth their best effort during the first Fit-to-Fight Readiness Challenge held here Sept. 29. The day included a 5K run and a variety of fitness activities including track-and-field events, tug-o-war, hot-shot basketball, in addition to tricycle and litter relays. The 87th FTS placed first with 420 points. Full results, place and point tally are as follows:

| | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2nd 86 FTS (386) | 6th 47 OSS (350) | 9th 47 SFS (278) |
| 3rd 47 CS (383) | 7th 47 FTW Staff (347) | 10th 47 MDG (268) |
| 4th 85 FTS (382) | 8th 47 CES (330) | 11th 47 MSS (221) |
| 5th 84 FTS (359) | | 12th 47 CONS/LG (200) |
| | | 13th 47th SVS (174) |



Technical Sgt. Thomas Cooper, 47th Security Forces Squadron, maneuvers his way to the finish line during the tricycle relay.



A large group of participants put their skills to the test and have fun during the water balloon toss.



Photo by Airman 1st Class Olufemi A. Owolabi



Staff Sgt. Beth Kirk
47th Mission Support Squadron

Hometown: San Antonio

Family: Justin, Layla, and London Kirk

Time at Laughlin: 2 years and 5 months

Time in military service: 6 years

Greatest accomplishments: It would have to be between making senior airman 'Below the Zone' and then Staff first time around or winning first place in the 'Best in The West Karate' competition for my weight division back in high school.

Hobbies: I like dancing and collecting scrapbooks, and even though I don't do it good, I love to sing.

Bad habit: I never put things back where they belong, and then when I need whatever it is, I can never find it.

Favorite movie: "The Count of Monte Cristo," and "An American President"

If you could spend one hour with any person, who would it be and why? I would like to sit in on a practice session and listen to Tom Petty and the Heart Breakers jam out.

"Staff Sgt. Beth Kirk epitomizes customer service with her positive, can-do attitude...she pours her heart and soul into serving others, and that's what the Air Force is all about!"

—First Lt. Margaret Eichner,
Former supervisor and officer in charge, 47th Operations Group
Commander's Support Staff

Fire Prevention Week focuses on safety in homes

In an effort to battle home fires before they start, Laughlin's fire department has taken a lead role in this year's Fire Prevention Week.

Fire officials here have organized a week full of activities to entertain and educate the public. They hope to raise awareness of key fire safety issues, helping base members prevent fires and fire injuries, especially in the home.

Fire Prevention Week, which runs from Sunday through Oct. 15, is designated by a presidential proclamation and coincides with the anniversary of the great Chicago fire of Oct. 9, 1871.

Col. Tod Wolters, 47th Flying Training Wing commander, issued the proclamation for Laughlin.

Based on national fire trends, the National Fire Protection Association established "Use Candles With Care" as this year's theme for Fire Prevention Week. Mishandling candles results in about 18,000 fires and 190 deaths annually throughout the nation. Twelve such fires have occurred in the Air Force over the past three years, according to fire officials.

"Many people don't realize that they are at greater danger from fire at home than anywhere else," said John

Alexander, Laughlin's fire prevention chief. "Fortunately, there are many things residents can do to turn that around and make their homes safer."

Mr. Alexander added that Fire Prevention Week is the time when they reach out to the community one-on-one, teaching people of every age how to prevent fires.

"This year we will be focusing in particular on candle fires, a serious and growing part of the fire problem," he said.

In addition to using candles safely, fire officials urge everyone to ensure smoke alarms are installed on every level of the home and kept working with monthly testing and annual battery replacement.

All smoke alarms should be replaced with a new unit after 10 years, according to the fire prevention staff, who handles the replacement of smoke alarms on base.

Fire officials also remind each member of the household to know the fire escape plan and practice it twice a year.

Call the fire prevention officials at 298-5663 to learn more about candle safety and all forms of fire prevention.

(Courtesy Laughlin fire department)

Laughlin's observance, schedule of events

Saturday

10 a.m.: A parade starts at the base fire station and ends at the base exchange parking lot.

11 a.m. to 1 p.m.: A fire education and information booth, fire truck display, fire extinguisher live fire demonstration, and fire safety trailer will be set up in the base exchange parking lot. Refreshments will also be available.

Tuesday

9 a.m. to 3 p.m.: Fire prevention lectures will be conducted at Ruben Chavira Elementary School.

1 to 3 p.m.: Fire extinguisher classes will be conducted at the Fiesta Center.

Wednesday

9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.: Laughlin Fire Department Open House Tours, Building 220.

Thursday

9 to 10 a.m.: A fire extinguisher live fire demonstration will be held at the Youth Center.

9 a.m. to 3 p.m.: Fire prevention lectures will be conducted at Cardwell Elementary School.

Oct. 14

10 to 11 a.m.: Base library reading session.

1 to 3 p.m.: Fire extinguisher live fire demonstration at the base fire department.

9 a.m. to 3 p.m.: Fire prevention lectures at Buena Vista Elementary School.

Oct. 15

9 to 11 a.m.: Public fire education, information handouts, fire truck display and fire safety trailer smoke house tours at the commissary.

Saving lives, losing lives through eyes of medics

By Tech. Sgt. Brian Davidson
*447th Air Expeditionary Group
public affairs*

BAGHDAD Iraq — The faces of Air Force medics serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom are often the first, and sometimes the last, seen by those who are left hurt and bleeding by an enemy fighting against peace and freedom.

It is these same medics who see the pain and suffering of the injured, and the skill, dedication and compassion of the doctors, nurses and other medical providers who try their best to put broken bodies back together.

For Staff Sgts. Charles Berry and Bobby Lawson, serving as medics for the 447th Expeditionary Medical Squadron has been an emotional roller coaster. Dedicated to crafting their medical skill, these medics deployed from Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., have learned the reality of war offers new challenges and lessons every day.

Working from a series of temper tents that sit mostly unnoticed near the flightline of the international airport here, a medic's role in providing medical care can mean the difference between life and death.

Along a rough and pitted gravel road, a sign reads "EMEDS" with an arrow pointing the way.

In front of the tents, another simple sign, this one white with a red cross, is what draws people to the 447th EMEDS.

Inside the medical tent exists a different world; there are shelves stocked with medical supplies bordering brightly-lit treatment areas, X-ray capabilities, laboratory services and even an operating room.

When a person suffering from the physical trauma of war is brought in, the medics take action.

"We could all be sitting there laughing and joking when suddenly a person with a life-threatening injury bangs through our front door," said Capt. Stacy Carr, a 447th EMEDS nurse. "At that point, we put emotions aside and focus on the task at hand — giving them a chance to survive with the best quality of life possible."

Deployed from Andrews Air Force Base, Md., Captain Carr describes the



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Brian Davidson

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Staff Sgt. Charles Berry keeps blood and fluids flowing in the operating room as doctors treat a patient injured in an insurgent attack. The doctors, nurses and other medics with the 447th Expeditionary Medical Squadron here have treated more than 3,000 patients during the past five months. Sergeant Berry is deployed from Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.

medics as full of energy and vast knowledge.

"I'm new to working trauma and intensive care so my anxieties ran high at times," she said. "But with these medical technicians working by my side, I have the confidence to get the job done."

One afternoon proved to be an example of how unpredictable events can be. Sergeants Berry and Lawson were working at the patient check-in desk when an unusual noise, followed by shouting, drew them outside where they found a vehicle carrying two wounded Soldiers. Within moments, the medical team had the men inside and

were assessing and treating them for blast injuries. Both Soldiers were successfully stabilized and ultimately made it to Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Md., where they are expected to recover.

While Sergeant Lawson's career plans never originally included joining the military or becoming a medic, he said he has found his job to be very rewarding.

"People look to us in their time of need," he said. "What could be more rewarding than being there for someone and caring for them in that time of need? It's an experience of a lifetime."

When the injured cannot make it to the medics on their own, a complex system of medical airlift coordinates their evacuation to medical care.

Day and night, Sergeants Berry and Lawson, or one of the other medics, can be found headed out to the flightline in an ambulance to meet a medical evacuation helicopter bringing in the wounded.

Before the ambulance even starts the return trip to the medical tent, the medics are assessing and treating their patients.

Medical care here has included such a vast array of patients and injuries that there is no such thing as a textbook case. Injured American and coalition servicemembers, contractors of countless nationalities, and Iraqi men, women and children have all passed through the EMEDS doors.

With deep brown eyes that reflect quiet confidence, Sergeant Berry is not a tall man, or muscle-bound in any way. Better described as unimposing and lanky, he has a razor wit about him and moves with catlike grace, untiring skill and fierce dedication when attending to his patients.

Physically a direct opposite to Sergeant Berry, Sergeant Lawson is tall and broad and sports a shaved head, making him look more like an action hero than the gentle giant as his co-workers describe him. With a barrel chest and strong arms, he prefers to quietly go about his duties unnoticed.

Whether treating simple illnesses or the most devastating of combat injuries, the medics can handle one patient at a time or scramble to treat mass

casualties simultaneously. A far cry from the typical patient setting in the medical facility at home, the medics are called upon to serve in almost every aspect of patient care.

"Here, it's all about being ready for trauma," Sergeant Berry said. "Whether battle or nonbattle injuries, when someone is hurt, the clock is ticking and it's up to EMEDS to assess, stabilize, treat and medevac a patient to a higher echelon of care."

To the doctors, the medics serve as an extra set of hands.

"They have become experts at countless tasks, well beyond their original training or job description," said Maj. (Dr.) Patrick Miller. "Surgical, biomedical equipment, immunizations, laboratory, even emergency generator maintenance — they have learned it all."

With all of their combined training, sometimes the medical team cannot turn fate. In some cases, injuries are just too extensive for a patient to be saved.

Over the months, insurgents have sent both servicemembers and civilians to EMEDS with countless and devastating injuries. The most serious of these come from improvised explosive devices, a particularly deadly weapon used indiscriminately by terrorists.

In one attack, a man was brought to the medics with a gunshot wound to the face and shattered femur. Although his injuries would task the most modern emergency care facility, the surgeons were able to turn the Grim Reaper away, and are confident in both his recovery and quality of life.

Another success accredited to the medical team that will directly affect patient care is a new \$1.35-million facility planned to replace the current tents before the end of this year. The new facility takes EMEDS from six to 15 thousand square feet and includes a vast array of medical equipment.

As the latest air and space expeditionary force rotation quickly draws to a close for the men and women of the 447th EMEDS, more than 3,000 patients have passed through their doors in nearly five months. Some were lost, most were saved, but all were treated with dignity, compassion and uncompromising care.

Cookie Lady sends more than 30,000 cookies to deployed troops

By Staff Sgt.
Kristine Dreyer
22nd Air Refueling Wing
public affairs

MCCONNELL AIR FORCE BASE, Kan.—Three Airmen received some “sweet” support from the “Rose Hill Cookie Lady” while they were deployed.

Since Feb. 5, Merry Debbrecht, nicknamed the Rose Hill Cookie Lady, has baked more than 30,000 cookies for deployed troops all over the world.

Mrs. Debbrecht’s baking project began after her grandson, Army Private 1st Class Andrew Webb, deployed overseas.

“As soon as I knew my grandson was going, I started baking,” she said.

But supporting just her grandson wasn’t enough. What really sparked her baking drive was her grandson’s graduation at Fort Hood, Texas. Unable to attend the ceremony, she asked her son, Mike, to tell her every detail. As he told her about the ceremony, he mentioned how Soldiers celebrated with their family. But at her grandson’s ceremony, one lonely Soldier stood alone on the field with no family.

“That just broke my heart,” she said. “And I realized that there are others out there deployed overseas with no family or whose family can’t afford

to send them things from home. I just couldn’t stand the thought of one our Soldiers not getting at least something from home.”

At first, she counted every Soldier in the pictures her grandson would send her. Her grandson always told her that deployed troops share everything, so she always sent enough cookies for everyone.

But she wanted to do even more.

To expand her cookie mission, she contacted and joined forces with the original Cookie Lady, Jeanette Cram from South Carolina. Mrs. Cram began baking cookies for deployed troops in 1990 and to date has sent more than 82,700 cookies.

Now Mrs. Debbrecht bakes for five to six hours every day serving up a minimum of 20 dozen cookies by day’s end. Her cookie-support mission has now grown so large she has recruited two additional volunteers, one in Wichita, Kan., and one in Haysville, Kan., to help with the baking.

With more than a dozen different recipes, the Rose Hill Cookie Lady ensures each person receives a variety of cookies. For example, because of the summer heat, chocolate chip cookies are not sent until the weather cools down. But she has found an alternative to

meet the needs of the troops whose favorite cookie seems to be chocolate chip.

“I’ll make the cookie and substitute chocolate chips with M&Ms, and they survive (through the mail,)” said Mrs. Debbrecht. “When it gets cooler, I will send chocolate chips (again.)”

But for those troops who just can’t wait, she has found another chocolate chip alternative.

“I (use) carob chips for those who are allergic to chocolate,” said Mrs. Debbrecht. “It looks and tastes like chocolate, and it makes it through the mail without melting.”

And it seems that the Rose Hill Cookie Lady’s labor of love has been appreciated on the deployed front.

“I think it really boosted their morale,” said Suzanne Jones who requested a package be sent to her husband, Master Sgt. Keith Jones, and his deployed co-workers in Southeast Asia. “It lets them know people really appreciate what they do over there.”

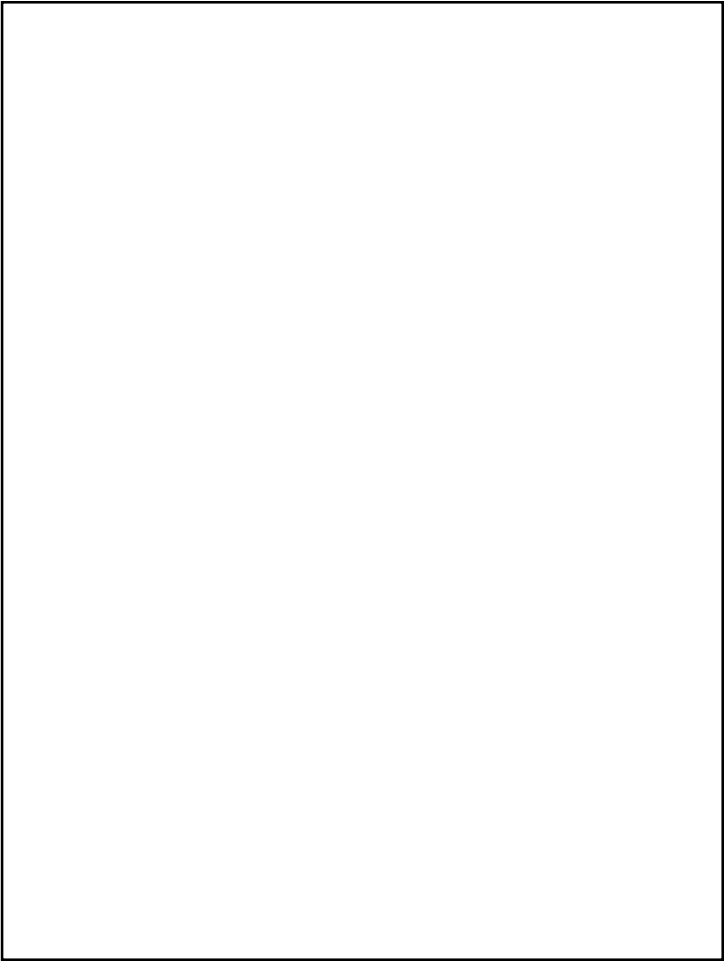
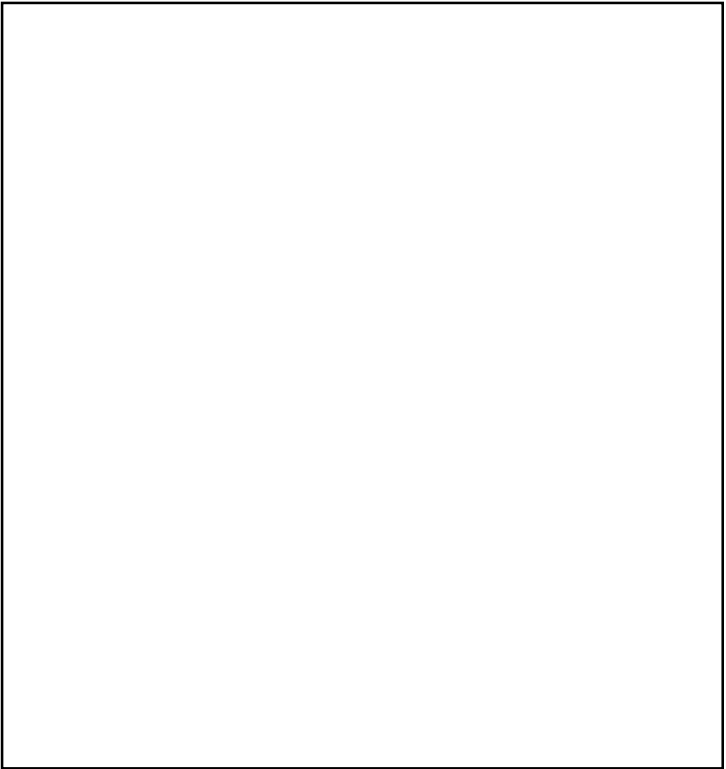
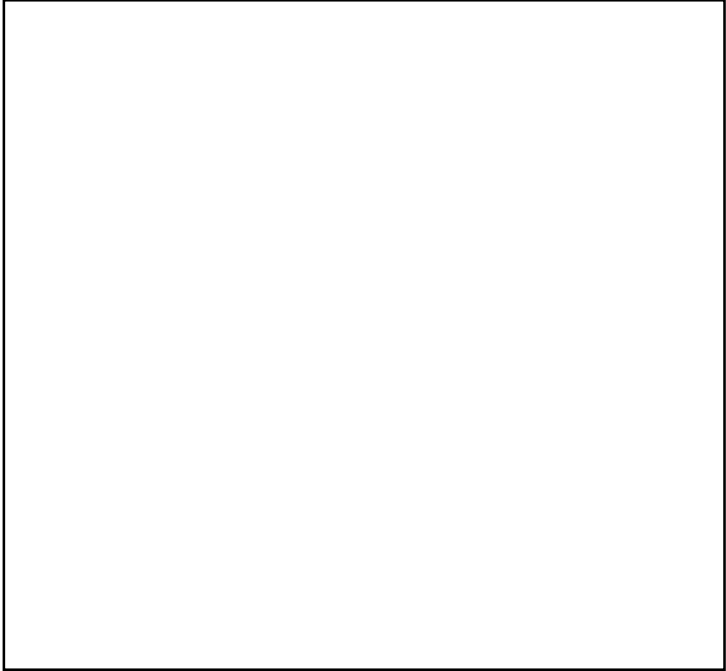
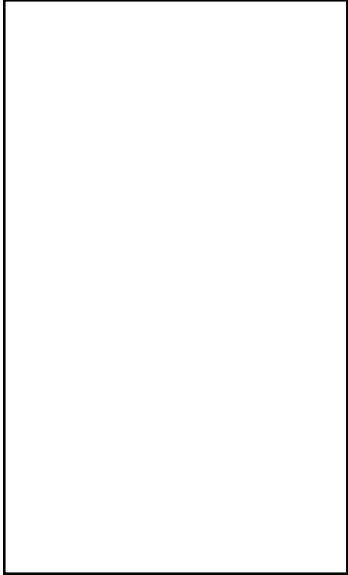
“It’s a great feeling to us when people send care packages,” added Sergeant Jones.

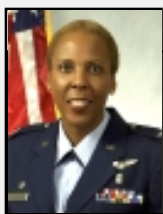
Not only did Sergeant Jones and his group receive 9 dozen M&M cookies, the care package also included chips and candy.

The little extras don’t seem to affect Mrs. Debbrecht’s operation. In fact, her whole cookie project is self-funded. She sells her homemade cookies at a local Rose Hill store to help fund her project. The cost for her mission averages about

\$200 a week, which includes ingredients and postage.

“I want to do this,” Mrs. Debbrecht said. “They take care of our country. If I can provide a bright spot in the day of just one Soldier, I’ll do whatever I can do — they deserve it.”





What's up Doc?

By Col. Laura Torres-Reyes
47th Medical Group
commander

Question: I recently changed duty stations to Laughlin from Elmendorf Air Force Base, Ark. While there, I was prescribed a medication (Wellbutrin) that my body reacted to very well, and I have been taking it for a year and a half now. When my prescription ran out, I made an appointment to have my prescription renewed as soon as I arrived here. I was able to see a provider, and she was very helpful in getting my prescription renewed.

However, when I took my prescription to the pharmacy, I was told it had to be reviewed and approved, and that I would know something in the next few business days. That was almost two

weeks ago. I have tried talking to the pharmacy in person and on the phone, and although the people I talked to were very courteous, my case always seems to be on someone else's desk. I took the issue to my supervisor who contacted my provider. The provider contacted me and told me the pharmacist did not want to approve my prescription because it was too expensive.

They wanted me to try alternatives. This brings up many questions.

One, how is it that at Elmendorf I can be prescribed a medication and be taking it that very same day, but at Laughlin it's too expensive and will take over a month to receive, if at all?

Two, if I have been taking this medication with positive results for over a year now, why is it such a hassle to get more for me?

I am starting to feel the effects of not having the medication on a daily basis. It seems very irresponsible for a clinic to allow this to happen. I understand that Laughlin is a small base, and that medications may be in short supply here, but I also know that the medication I am trying to receive is available for

those in the smoking cessation course. After I involved my supervisor, he tried every channel he could think of but was unable to get any results.

Answer: I apologize that this has been such a frustrating experience for you. Our pharmacist, Maj. Robert Pohler, has investigated the issue and has made the following improvements to prevent this type of experience from happening again.

First, we will make every effort to ensure our patients and staff are aware of what our formulary is and the purpose it serves. It is never acceptable to use cost as a sole reason for denial of a request. Military medical treatment facilities (MTFs), like most other health maintenance organizations, are required to have a closed formulary.

This means that in order to provide a medication which is not listed on the MTF formulary, our providers must justify the reason the formulary medication will not adequately control the condition being treated. In your particular situation, the provider had not submit-

ted sufficient information to justify the request which resulted in a delay in obtaining the medication. To prevent delays in the future and ensure timely resolution of requests, Maj. Pohler has implemented a regular review of pharmacy requests that includes tracking results and ensuring patients are notified of the outcome within five business days.

Finally, we are making sure our patients know that every section has a Patient Advocate who is the person you should immediately ask to speak to if you are encountering problems.

The Patient Advocate is responsible for writing down your complaint, investigating the issue, and ensuring resolution of the issue to completion.

Thank you so much for your question!

You may contact Colonel Torres-Reyes at laura.torres-reyes@laughlin.af.mil if you have a What's Up Doc? question.

Mental health counseling not career ending

By Staff Sgt.
Patrick Brown
45th Space Wing
public affairs

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – Retired Senior Master Sgt. Patrick McCathern was literally seconds away from death. He hung by a noose tied to his bathroom door, ready to die.

As he felt his last few gasping breaths fill his lungs, he noticed the wagging tail and puppy-dog eyes of his pet, Dunkin, looking up at him. That was enough to make him untie the rope from around his neck.

The incident led Mr. McCathern to seek help,

which allowed him to dig himself out of a nearly yearlong depression. He credits the professional help he received at Wilford Hall Medical Center at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, for helping him pull himself out of what he calls an "unimaginable hell."

"I would have rather been shot and endure that pain than endure the mental pain," he said. "But after that stay at the hospital, I did nothing but get stronger."

Since September 2001, Mr. McCathern has been a spokesperson for the National Institute of Mental Health's "Real Men. Real Depression." campaign. He has also spoken at Department of Defense-level conferences, and

his public service announcements have been on television and radio.

Today Mr. McCathern works for the Army as a new equipment training instructor at Fort Huachuca, Ariz. He shared his insights and experiences with two full houses at the base theater here Sept. 23.

He discussed depression and suicide — two topics in which he is a subject-matter expert. His aim was to encourage those who have feelings of depression or thoughts of suicide to seek help.

Mr. McCathern said people must realize the longstanding stigma that mental health counseling is detrimental to military advancement is

not true. He said seeking counseling doesn't mean the end of a career.

"One of the big myths is, as soon as you seek any kind of counseling, your career starts going downhill. Your (security) clearance is taken away and you never get it back. That's wrong," he said.

After seeking counseling, the Air Force did suspend his security clearance, but only for two weeks. He said it didn't take him long to get back his top secret clearance.

Maj. (Dr.) Kimberly Finney, commander of the Life Skills Support Center here, says she has never seen a case where a clearance has been denied because of mental counseling.

"In terms of a security clearance, good judgment and reliability are the underlying tenets of the DOD security guidelines," she said. "So anytime you have a problem and you're doing something to prevent further problems, it shows good judgment."

Unless there is a credible threat to security or people, any counseling held at, or through the Life Skills Support Center, remains confidential, Dr. Finney said.

"Our mission is rehabilitation and return to duty," she said. "If the Air Force didn't allow people the opportunity to get better, then we'd be unemployed. If we can't be helpful, then we can't be useful."